

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change****Annual Air Quality Status Report 2025****1. Purpose of Report**

To advise Members of the latest Air Quality Status Report which has been submitted to the Department of Food Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This is in accordance with the Council's Corporate Priority of Environment – protect the environment for the future and Community Safety – a safe place for everyone.

**2. Recommendation**

**Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the Air Quality Status Report 2024 and the Updated Action Plan, be approved.**

**3. Detail**

Each year, DEFRA requires all local authorities in England to produce an Annual Status Report (ASR) in respect of air quality for the preceding calendar year. The production of an ASR is intended to aid local transparency, increase accessibility of air quality to the wider public audience and encourage buy-in to delivering air quality improvement measures by those best placed to assist (e.g. Directors of Public Health, transport managers etc.). The format of the report is specified by DEFRA and there is a submission date of 30 June each year.

The annual bias corrections used in the report are not usually available until at least the end of April each year, and the required information from Nottinghamshire County Council is not available until June, which can create challenges in the timing and the submission of the ASR to DEFRA and bringing the ASR to cabinet.

Once submitted, the ASR is appraised by technical experts appointed by DEFRA and an Appraisal Report is issued which either accepts or rejects the ASR and provides additional audit observations. The report as attached has been submitted to DEFRA and is currently awaiting appraisal feedback.

The Air Quality Action Plan relevant to Broxtowe's direct actions is now included into the Air Quality project strand of the Climate Change and Green Futures Action Plan and updated there accordingly. Broxtowe's ASRs are approved by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change and the Director of Public Health before submission. Cabinet will be advised of the feedback received from DEFRA later in the year. The feedback from the 2024 Broxtowe ASR was that it was an example of good practice.

The key findings of the 2025 ASR are that:

- The 2024 nitrogen dioxide results show that the air quality levels are below the objective of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> for all of the monitoring locations throughout the Borough being monitored by 41 diffusion tubes.
- The Council's diffusion tube network across the Borough has consistently shown that the air quality levels are below the objective and are clearly showing a downward trend.
- In many locations the air quality in 2024 was better than the measured air quality in 2020 – a year when traffic emissions were significantly reduced due to Covid19 restrictions on movement.
- The real time air quality sensor, which monitors PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub> in the Trowell AQMA has provided BBC with results that show measured air quality meets the statutory objectives for each of these airborne pollutants.

The ASR outlines all of the actions that the Council and other stakeholders have completed or are taking forward in pursuit of improving air quality. The ASR summarises a hundred and ten (110) actions, each of which contribute to better air quality. They have all therefore helped deliver the observed improvements in air quality and should contribute to the continuation of improved air quality.

The ASR will be published on the Council's website. As a public facing document, it also contains a summary of the ways in which members of the public can take their own action to help improve air quality.

The actions contained in the ASR also link strategically with county and regional action to improve air quality contained in the Air Quality Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire 2020-2030.

Some of the key actions delivered or completed during 2024 were:

- Approval and initial implementation of the Councils Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (EVI).
- Replacement of Council refuse collection HGVs with newer, lower emission HVO vehicles.
- Approval of a new Smoke Control Order covering all of Broxtowe which will take effect in mid-2025.
- Commissioning of new cremators at the Bramcote Crematorium.
- Completion of cycling infrastructure improvements in Stapleford supported through the Stapleford Towns Fund.

The key actions for future delivery are:

- Implementation of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (EVI).
- Implementation of the Broxtowe Smoke Control Order.
- Continued reduction of emissions from the Councils own transport fleet.
- Revision of the Air Quality Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire 2020-2030.
- Delivery of low carbon homes capital projects.

Further measures to improve air quality have been devised in this reporting year for which will be implemented in 2025/26.

4. Key Decision

This is a key decision as defined under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as it affects more than two Wards within the Borough.

5. Updates from Scrutiny

Not applicable.

6. Financial Implications

The comments from the Assistant Director Finance Services were as follows:

There are no additional financial implications, with operational costs being contained within existing budgets. There could be additional costs for the Council if real time air monitoring continues and/or action was taken to expand or increase monitoring. Any significant budget implications going forward, over and above virement limits, would require approval by Cabinet.

7. Legal Implications

The comments from the Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal Services were as follows:

Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 sets out statutory provisions on air quality. Section 82 provides that Councils shall review the air quality within their area. Section 83 requires Councils to designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) where air quality objectives are not being achieved, or are not likely to be achieved (i.e. where pollution levels exceed the air quality objectives) as set Cabinet 25 July 2023 out in the Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000. Where an area has been designated as an AQMA, Section 84 requires councils to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the remedial measures required to achieve the air quality standards for the area covered within the AQMA. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has provided statutory guidance in the form of the Local Air Quality Management Policy Guidance. The guidance gives particular focus to so-called 'priority

pollutants' such as Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and so-called 'Particulate Matter' (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) which are relevant to district councils. Councils are required to submit an Annual Status Report (ASR) to DEFRA in order to report the progress being made in achieving reductions in concentrations of emissions relating to relevant pollutants below air quality objective levels. The completed report is submitted to the Secretary of State (DEFRA) for consideration.

8. Human Resources Implications

There were no comments from the Human Resources Manager.

9. Union Comments

There were no comments from the Union.

10. Climate Change Implications

The actions outlined in the air quality status report, support and reinforce the programme of activities identified in the Climate Change and Green Futures Strategy and delivery programme. These actions have already contributed to favourable environmental outcomes, such as the improvement of air quality, the reduction of carbon emissions and a contribution towards mitigating the worst impacts of climate change. Moreover, future actions resulting from Local Air Quality Management in the Borough will continue to deliver beneficial results in the future.

11. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

As there is no change to policy an equality impact assessment is not required.

13. Background Papers

Nil.